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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS
MAY 17 1946
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

(Release on receipt)

SUBJECT: "Vegetable Prospect-Varied and Plentiful"--Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture

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You have only to pause at the fresh vegetable bin in your favorite grocery store to see what a great variety and abundance of vegetables are on the market this spring. The colors range from tomato red through the greens to carrot orange--a vivid picture of plenty.

Economists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture tell us the supply of vegetables is 10 percent higher than they were last year--also a year of vegetable plenty--and prices are moderately below those of 1945. This is cheering news for all of us who plan to use vegetables in the place of grains needed for famine relief.

Weather permitting---there's prospect that commercial growers of the United States may set a new high production record this year. And we can count on having an abundance of vegetables to eat fresh as well as for canning and freezing.

Here's how the economists picture the supply for your market basket in coming months.

The spring crop of cabbage is somewhat smaller than last year's. Even so...it's 22 percent above the average of pre-war years.

Onion growers have increased their plantings nearly nine thousand acres in the late spring area. And the growers' intentions to plant in later areas indicate an even larger onion supply than we'll get from the spring crop.

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The harvest of lettuce is up about 14 percent above last year. Comparing this with former years...the economists tell us it's 50 percent above the average production before the war.

Very likely you've already noticed an unusually good supply of celery on the market. Production of this crisp and crunchy vegetable is up one-fourth over last year and far ahead of pre-war output. And prices are generally much below prices for corresponding weeks last year.

Up to now you may not have found tomatoes in great plenty. The supply through early April was considerably lower than the same period in 1945. There were two reasons for this. The plantings were smaller--partly because of weather conditions. And the yield was down. So added together...these cut down on winter tomato production. Outlook for early spring tomatoes is much better. Ordinarily...this crop is two or three times as large as that of the winter season. This year...it's more than four times as large.

To mention a few other spring truck crops:

Asparagus production is up five percent....carrots up six percent....green peas about 12 percent more than last year. Only snap beans show a decrease in production---about five percent smaller than in 1945. And there will still be a good crop of snap beans if the weather is right.

So the prospect is good for a variety and abundance of fresh vegetables. And this is fortunate because the demand this year will also be great. We want to use vegetables in the place of less plentiful foods. And we want to eat vegetables because they furnish us with many of the vitamins we need for good health.

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